That Important CASE of CONSCIENCE Practically Reſolv'd:

Wherein lies that exact Righteouſneſs, which is required between Man and Man.

A

SERMON

PREACH'D AT

CRIPPLEGATE,

In the Year 1661.

BY

John Tillotſon, M.A.

And then Publiſh'd by himſelf.

LONDON:
Printed for T. WOODWARD, next Door but one to *Temple-Bar.* 1720.

That Important Case of Conscience Practically Resolv'd; *Wherein lies that exact Righteousness, which is required between Man and Man.*

A

SERMON

PREACH'D

At *Cripplegate*, in the Year 1661.

MATTH. VII. 12.

Therefore all things whatsoever you would that men should do unto you, do ye even so to them, for this is the Law and the Prophets.

THESE words being brought in by way of inference from something said before, we must look back a little to find out the relation of them to the former verses. At the 7th verse, Christ commands to ask of God those things which we want; to encourage us to ask, he promises we shall receive; to induce us to believe this promise, he puts a temporal case; Our earthly Fathers, which are evil, give us good things when we ask them; how much more easily may we believe this of a good God, of infinite goodness. Now as we desire God should give us those things we ask, so we should do to others; and not only so, but *universally in all other things, what we would that men should do to us, that we should do to others. That men should do unto you*; though the persons be expresst, yet we may take it impersonally, by an usual *Hebraism*, as if it had been said, *whatever* you would should be done unto you, leaving the person to be supplied in the largest sense; thus, whatever you would should be done unto you by God or men, *This is the Law and the Prophets*; *i. e.* this is the sum of the Old Testament, so far as concerns our duty to our Neighbour.

The *Observation* which ariseth from the words is this:

The great Rule of Equity in all our dealings with men is this, to do as we would be done unto: This Rule hath been otherwise expresst, but not more emphatically in any other form of words than this here in the Text; *Matth.* 22. 39. *Love thy Neighbour as thy self:* this requires that we should bear the same *affection* to our Neighbour which we would have him bear to us; but the *Rule* in the *Text* expresly requires that we should do the same *Offices* to others, which we would have them do to us. *Severus* the Emperor (as the *Historian* tells us) did learn this Rule of Christians, and did much reverence Christ, and Christianity for it; but he expressed it negatively, *Quod tibi non vis, alteri ne feceris:* Now this forbids us to do injuries to others, but doth not so expresly command us to do kindnesses and courtesies. *Lampridius.*

In ſpeaking to this Rule, I ſhall give you,

1. The *Explication* of it.
2. The *Grounds* of it.
3. The *Inſtances* wherein we ought principally to practiſe it.

1. For *Explication*; the meaning of it is this: Put thy ſelf into the Caſe and Circumſtances of every man, with whom thou haſt to do; that is, ſuppoſe thou wert he, and as he is, and he were thy ſelf, and as thou art; that then which thou wouldeſt deſire he ſhould do to thee, that do thou to him; and that which thou wouldeſt be unwilling he ſhould do to thee, do not thou do to him. Now this is an *exact* Rule; for we are very curious in determining our own Privileges, and what duty others owe to us; juſt ſo much as we take to our ſelves, we muſt allow to others; what we expect from others when we are in ſuch Circumſtances, we muſt do the ſame to them in the like. And this is a *plain* and eaſie Rule; many men cannot tell what is Law or Juſtice, or Right in ſuch a Caſe; many cannot deduce the Laws of Nature one from another; but there is no man but can tell what it is that he would have another man do to him; every man can take his own actions, and put them into the other ſcale, and ſuppoſe, if this that I do now to another, were to be done to me, ſhould I like it, ſhould I be pleaſed, and contented with it: And thus by changing the ſcales, his own ſelf-love, and ſelf-intereſt, and other paſſions, will add nothing to the weight; for that ſelf-intereſt which makes a man covetous, and inclines him to wrong another man for his own advantage, makes him likewiſe (when the ſcales are changed) unwilling that another man ſhould wrong him; that ſelf-conceit which makes a man proud, and apt to ſcorn, and deſpiſe others, makes him unwilling that another ſhould contemn him.

I queſtion not but by this time, you underſtand the meaning of the Rule; but we are not yet paſt all difficulties about it: Three things are to be done, before this Rule will be of uſe to us.

1. We muſt make it appear that it is *reaſonable.*
2. Make it *certain*; for till it be certain, it cannot be a Rule.
3. Make it *practicable.*

1. We muſt make it appear to be *reaſonable:* The difficulty about the Reaſonableneſs of it is this; according to this Rule I ſhall be obliged to do that many times which is ſinful, and to omit that which is a neceſſary duty: I will give two or three Inſtances: *Saul* would have had his Armour-bearer to have kill'd him; might he therefore have kill'd his Armour-bearer, if he had been willing, and had deſired it? I may not be an inſtrument, or furtherer of another man's ſin, tho' I were ſo wicked as to deſire that another would be ſo to me. If I were a Child, I would not have my Father correct me; or a Malefactor, I would not have the Magiſtrate cut me off: muſt there therefore be no correction or puniſhment? Now becauſe of theſe, and the like inſtances which may be given, the Rule is neceſſarily to be underſtood of things that may be done or omitted; *i. e.* which are not unlawful or unreaſonable: *Saul* might not kill his Armour-bearer: I may not further another man's ſin in the caſes propounded; becauſe theſe things may not be done, they are morally impoſſible, that is, unlawful: A Parent, or a Magiſtrate, may not wholly omit correction or puniſhment, becauſe ſuch omiſſion would tend to the ruine of good manners, and of humane ſociety.

2. We muſt make the Rule *certain:* The difficulty about the Certainty of it is this; everlaſting diſputes will ariſe about what is lawful and reaſonable, and unlawful and unreaſonable: Now we muſt reduce it to a Certainty thus; whatever I would that another ſhould do to me, that I ſhould do to him, unleſs the thing

thing be *plainly* and *evidently* unlawful or unreasonable, and this cuts off all disputes, for though there may be perpetual disputes about what is lawful and reasonable, or the contrary, yet there can be no dispute about the unlawfulness and unreasonableness of those things which are plainly and evidently so, for that which is plain and evident is out of all dispute. To confirm this, let us consider another Text, *Phil.* 4. 8. where the Apostle exhorts Christians to follow whatever things are *true*, and *honest*, and *just*, and *pure*, and as a discovery of what things are such, he adds, whatever things are *lovely*, of *good report*, and *praise worthy*; that is, whatever things are amiable, well spoken of, and praised by wise and good men, (who are the only competent Judges of these things) if they be not plainly contrary to truth, or honesty, or justice, or purity, follow these things; and if this be not the meaning, those words *lovely*, of *good report*, *praise worthy*, are superfluous, and do not at all direct our Conversation, which certainly the Apostle intended to do by them.

3. We must make it *practicable*; There are two things which make the practice of it difficult.

1. A seeming *Contradiction* in the Rule.
2. *Partiality* in judging of the circumstances of other mens conditions and our own.

1. A seeming *Contradiction* in the Rule, which you will see in these Instances; if I desire a thing, I would not have another stand in competition with me for it; if another desire a thing, I would not have him think much that I stand in competition with him; if I be indebted to another, I would not have him arrest me; if another be indebted to me, I would not have him think much that I arrest him; when we sell we care not how dear, when we buy we care not how cheap; now if this were a real contradiction in the Rule, it were impossible it should be put in practice, but it is only a contradiction in our *Wills*, which must thus be reconciled to the *Rule*.

1*st*, We must consider which of these Wills is most reasonable, and the greater reason and equity must carry it, and that which is plainly unreasonable, in comparison of the other, is not to be regarded. If we consider the two first instances, this is most reasonable, that where men have an equal right, they should be allowed an equal liberty to use that right; another man has as much right to stand in competition with me for any thing, as I to stand in competition with him, and to arrest me in case of debt, as I to arrest him; and it is plainly unreasonable that I should use this right and another be debarred from it.

2*dly*, If both these contradictory wills be plainly unreasonable, as in the third instance of buying and selling, they must be *accommodated* by finding out such a *medium* as is *equally and mutually* good for all Buyers and Sellers; that is, such a proportion of gain may be taken, and must be allowed to be taken, as will be equally and mutually good for all Buyers and Sellers.

2. Another difficulty in the practice of this Rule, ariseth from mens *Partiality* in judging of the circumstances of other mens conditions and their own; we are apt to lessen the circumstances of another man's condition, and to overvalue our own; another man's concernments seems less to us than they are, and our own greater than they are. Now this difficulty will most eminently appear in *Cases* of *Passion* and *Interest*, and those *subordinate Relations* which are at the greatest distance; another man provokes me, I revenge my self on him; one asks me, Would you be contented to be thus dealt withal? I am ready to answer, yea, if I should so provoke another; I aggravate the fault of his provocation, and lessen that of my own revenge, here is *Passion*. I desire a courtesy of a man which he cannot conveniently do for me, he denies me, I think much

much at him, becauſe I judge the *Courteſy leſs*, and *his Obligation* to do it *greater* than indeed it is, here is *Intereſt*. I think if I were a Father, I ſhould not carry my ſelf ſo ſeverely towards my Children; if I were a Maſter, I ſhould give more liberty to Servants, and uſe them with a greater familiarity; if I were a Miniſter, I ſhould not gall the conſciences of people by ſo free and open a reproof of Sin; if I were a Magiſtrate, I ſhould make other Laws, or puniſh ſome crimes more or leſs ſeverely. Now if men frequently thus miſ-judge, how ſhall this Rule be put in practice?

To remove theſe difficulties as much as may be, and to make the practice of this Rule more eaſie, obſerve theſe Rules;

1. Labour to underſtand truly every man's condition ſo far as you have opportunity; this is eaſily ſaid, But how ſhall we come to do it? Thus, when you are in any condition, obſerve diligently the motions of your own mind, and how your affections then work, and what apprehenſions you then have of things, and what it is that in ſuch a condition you deſire and expect from others; and labour to remember this when you are out of that condition, and to retain the ſenſe which you then had of things.

2. In Caſes wherein you are unexperienced, and which you cannot reaſonably be preſumed to underſtand, partly becauſe of your diſtance from that condition, partly becauſe of the oppoſition of your own intereſt, and partly becauſe of the miſts and clouds of your own paſſion; truſt the concurrent experience of others that are in that condition, and think that you ought not to do that to another which the generality of mankind count grievous; and that fit to be done, which the moſt and wiſeſt in ſuch a condition and relation do uſually expect. If men when they are under and lie at the mercy of others, generally deſire that clemency and moderation ſhould be uſed towards them, how juſt ſoever thou mayeſt think thy ſeverity is, and that thou wouldeſt be contented that another ſhould deal ſo with thee, yet do not truſt thy preſent apprehenſions of things, but believe that thou wilt have the ſame ſenſe of things, when they lie heavy upon thee, with the reſt of mankind, and when thou art in their circumſtances, thou wilt deſire quarter as they do. In like manner, that reſpect and obedience which Parents, and Maſters, and Magiſtrates do generally expect, (even the beſt and wiſeſt of them) that do thou pay to them; and though it may have ſome appearance of rigour and injuſtice, yet believe that when thou comeſt to be in the ſame relation, thou wilt expect the ſame things as they do; and that thou doſt now judge otherwiſe, proceeds from thy inexperience and diſtance from that condition, or from paſſion and oppoſition of intereſt.

3. Conclude, that in Caſes betwixt Superiors and Inferiors, the partiality is uſually on the Inferiors ſide; and it is reaſonable thus to conclude, both becauſe Inferiors have ſeldom had experience of the other condition as Superiors uſually have had; a Child hath not been a Parent, or a Servant ordinarily a Maſter, or a Subject a Magiſtrate; but all Parents have been Children, and moſt Maſters have been Servants, and many Magiſtrates Subjects, and ſo they have had experience of both conditions; and likewiſe becauſe Inferiors cannot ſo well ſee the condition and circumſtances of thoſe that are above them, as thoſe that are above can of thoſe that are below them, they have the advantage of ground, and better opportunities of knowledge.

4. In judging of your preſent condition and circumſtances, always abate ſome thing for the preſence of them, and for ſelf-love, and ſelf-intereſt, and other paſſions. He that doth not conſider how apt every man is unequally to favour himſelf, doth not know the littleneſs and narrowneſs of human nature. We are near to our ſelves, and our own intereſt is near to us, and we ſee it in its full proportions, and with all poſſible advantages; other men and their intereſts are at a diſtance

from

from us, and ſeem leſs to us than they are. Now we muſt make abatements for this according to that experience which we have had of our own miſtakes, which, if we will obſerve as we paſs from one condition into another, we may eaſily be convinced how great many times they are.

2. For the *Grounds* of this. The equity of this Rule ſtands upon theſe foundations.

1. All men are equal in many things, and thoſe the greateſt things. Now I ſhould deal equally with him whom I acknowledge to be mine equal. *Have we not all one Father, hath not one God created us?* Are we not all made of the ſame materials? *Is it not appointed for all men once to die,* and after death to ſtand before the impartial judgment of God? We have all the ſame notions of right and wrong, we are all obnoxious to one another, and may be all beneficial one to another; we all love our ſelves, and ſtudy the advancement of our intereſt and happineſs. Thus far equal. Mal. 2. 10. Heb. 9. 27.

2. *In moſt of thoſe things wherein we are unequal, the inequality is not conſiderable,* ſo as to be a ground of any unequal dealing with one another. As to *ſtrength of body,* whatever the difference be, the inequality is not conſiderable, becauſe as to the greateſt effects of ſtrength their is an equality; every man that will venture his own life, may take away another man's, either by open force, or by ſurprize. *As to abilities of mind* (which we uſually call *parts*) there is *originally* a great equality, eſpecially if that received *Opinion* be true, that *ſouls are equal*; and as the *French* Philoſopher *Des Cartes* hath ingeniouſly obſerved, there is this notable ſign of the equality of mens underſtandings; *Nulla res* (ſaith he) *æquabilius inter homines diſtributa eſt quam bona mens, &c. Nothing is more equally divided among men than a good underſtanding; men will acknowledge others to be richer and ſtronger than themſelves, few will acknowledge others to be wiſer, or to have better parts than themſelves; every man thinks himſelf to have ſo good a proportion of parts and wiſdom, that even thoſe who are moſt covetous, and have the moſt inſatiable deſires as to other things, and whom nature could never ſatisfy in any thing elſe, yet would not deſire to have more wit than they have, or exchange their parts with any man.* Now there is no better ſign of an equal diſtribution of things, than that every man is contented with his ſhare. *Now becauſe all men generally think thus, it is to be preſumed that all are not deceived, but that there is ſome real equality, which is the ground of this conceit.* A difference indeed muſt be granted, but which ariſeth uſually from one of theſe two cauſes, either an *unequal exerciſe of our parts,* or *an unequal temper of body.* Now thoſe who are ſo happy as to exerciſe their underſtandings more than others, are very often rather conceited that they are wiſer than others, than really ſo; *for the greateſt Clerks are not always the wiſeſt Men*; thoſe who are unhappy in the temper of their bodies, are thereby inclined, how weak ſoever they be, to conceit themſelves as wiſe as others; ſo that whatever real inequality there be, conceit levels all again: So, that whether men be really wiſe, or only think themſelves ſo, it makes no difference as to mens dealing with one another, for they that think themſelves equal, will not deal but upon equal terms; ſo that *Ariſtotle*'s pretty notion, that *wiſe men are born to govern, and fools to obey,* ſignifies very little in this caſe; for there are but few ſuch fools in the world but would govern if they can: So that by vertue of wiſdom or parts, no man can challenge a priviledge or prerogative to himſelf above others, which another will not pretend to as well as he. *Dominus eſt alterius vitæ quicunq; contemnit ſuam.* *Diſſertat. de Methodo.* *Qui velit ingenio cedere rarus erit.* *Politic. c. 3.*

3. *In all thoſe things wherein men are unequal, the inequality is not fixt and conſtant, but mutable and by turns.* All things that belong to us are either the *endowments* of the *mind,* the *accidents* of the *body,* or the *circumſtances* of our *outward eſtate:* Now thoſe that are moſt unequal in any of theſe may be equal, or the inequality may turn and be as much on the other ſide. A diſeaſe may

ruine the moſt happy and excellent *Memory*, and make a man forget his own name; a little knock on any ſide of the head, may level the higheſt *Underſtanding* with the meaneſt; *Beauty*, *Health* and *Strength*, may be blaſted by a diſeaſe, or a thouſand other accidents; *Riches*, and *Honour*, and *Reputation*, are the moſt ſlippery and brittle things that belong to us, and when theſe are gone, *Friends* will fall off like leaves in *Autumn*. Now, why ſhould I deſpiſe another man, when I may be as ſilly as he; or bear down another by my ſtrength, when I may be as weak as he; or inſult over another's poor and low condition, when a day may level me with his meanneſs, and raiſe him to be as great and rich as I am?

4. Another ground is, *the mutual and univerſal equity and advantage of this Rule*. Upon thoſe terms I and all men ſhall be equally dealt with, it will be well with me, and well with all men. The obſervation of this Rule would ſecure peace to the world, and if it were generally practiſed, thoſe few that ſhould offend againſt it, would be looked upon as the peſts and troublers of humane ſociety. As by the violation of this Rule, every man becomes *a wolf*, and *beaſt of prey* to another, ſo by the mutual obſervation of it, every man would be a *God* to another; men would be full of mutual goodneſs, and pity, and compaſſion, they would be mutual benefactors one to another; all men would be as happy as it is poſſible for them to be in this world, and no man could be miſerable if it were in the power of his neighbour to help him.

5. The laſt ground I ſhall mention is, *the abſurdity and inconvenience of the contrary.*

And this is the moſt proper way of proving this; for as *Ariſtotle* tells us, *Firſt Principles which are evident by their own light, cannot be proved by way of demonſtration*, but of *conviction*; as thus, *contradictions cannot be true at once:* This cannot be demonſtrated *a priori*, becauſe there is nothing true before it to prove it by; therefore, whoever ſhall deny it, muſt be convinced of the truth of it, by ſhewing the abſurdities of the contrary. In like manner, this being one of the firſt Principles of humane ſociety, that we ſhould uſe no more liberty towards other men, than we would allow them to uſe towards us; the beſt way to convince any man of the reaſonableneſs and equity of it, will be to ſhew him the inconveniences of the contrary. Where-ever this Principle is violated, men will think themſelves injured; where men are injured, they will be apt to vindicate themſelves; hence comes contention and wars, which looſe the bands of humane ſociety; or if a man can pardon an injury, that hath received one, yet he that hath done it, cannot believe ſo, but he will fear revenge; and fear of being oppreſt, makes a man ſeek to anticipate and prevent another; ſo that every injury endangers the peace and ſecurity of mankind, and lays the foundation of perpetual miſchief; for by the ſame reaſon that I injure any man, I am obliged to ruine him.

He that breaks this Rule, doth what he can to break humane ſociety; that is, to ſpoil himſelf of all common protection, and to leave himſelf to ſtand upon his guard againſt all the world; in which ſtate no man can hope to continue, that is not wiſer and ſtronger than all the world. *Ariſtotle* tells us, *He that deſires to be alone, muſt either be a God, or a wild beaſt*; that is, he muſt either be ſelf-ſufficient, and ſtand in need of nothing, or elſe be wild and ſavage, and delight in cruelty and miſchief.

ἢ θηρίον ἢ θεός. *Politic. c. 2.*

3. The *Inſtances* wherein we ought chiefly to practiſe this Rule, are theſe:

1. In matters of *civil Reſpect and Converſation*. I muſt treat every man with that fair reſpect which I would have another to ſhew to me. We muſt accommodate our ſelves to mens particular tempers, and not be froward or intracta-

ble, or tenacious of our own humour, eſpecially when it lies in another man's way; but we muſt be apt to recede and give way, that there may be room for other mens tempers and humours as well as ours; our humour muſt not take up all the world. Thoſe who want this *Complaiſance*, are in ſociety (as one ingeniouſly compares them) like irregular ſtones in a building, which are full of roughneſs and corners; they *take* up more room than they *fill*, till they be poliſhed and made even, others cannot lie near them: So men of ſharp and perverſe humours are unſociable, till the ruggedneſs and aſperities of their nature be taken off. We muſt not carry our ſelves inſolently, or ſuperciliouſly, or contemptuouſly towards others; we muſt not be contumelious, nor by deed or word, countenance or geſture, declare hatred or contempt of others. We muſt not upbraid one another with any imperfection, or weakneſs, or deformity; we muſt not peremptorily contradict others; we muſt not uſe to talk things diſpleaſing to others, wherein their Credit, or Relations, or (eſpecially their Religion) is concerned. *Joſephus* ſaith, this was one of *Moſes* his Laws, (it was a good one whoſe-ever it was) ὃς ἄλλαι πόλεις νομίζουσι θεοὺς μὴ εἰς βλασφημείτω. *Let no man blaſpheme that which other nations count a God*, or make their Religion. Not but every man may confute a falſe Religion, and endeavour by all fair ways to convince a *Jew*, or *Turk*, or Heathen; but we may not reproach another man's Religion, or provoke any man in ordinary converſation, by unſeaſonable and uncivil reflections upon it; for we are with meekneſs to convince gain-ſayers, to reprove men for their ſins, but not to upbraid them with them: We muſt give no offence to the *Jew*, or to the *Gentile*, remembring always that the wrath of man doth not work the righteouſneſs of God; and that *Michael* the Arch-Angel, when he contended with the Devil, did not bring a railing accuſation againſt him; he did not revile him, no, not in heat of diſpute. And there is great reaſon why we ſhould thus carry our ſelves towards others, becauſe we our ſelves would not be contemned or deſpiſed, we would not have any man jeer us, or inſult over us, or upbraid us, or peeviſhly contradict us, or affront us by ſpeaking unhandſomely of us, or of our Relations, or of our Religion. Now if we would have others to conſider us, we muſt not neglect them; if we would be taken notice of for ſome body, we muſt not over-look others with contempt; every thing thinks it ſelf conſiderable, and there is nothing comes ſooner to us, or continues longer with us, than a ſenſe of our own worth; and we judge ill of humane nature, if we think another man is not as impatient of rude and uncivil uſage as we are; nothing would be deſpiſed; a worm would not be trod upon; nay, men do uſually over-value themſelves, and are apt to think that they are owners of that ſingular worth, which may command reſpect from all men, and that every one that paſſeth by ought to fall down, and do obeiſance to them; they have *Joſeph's dream* waking, they think *all mens ſheaves bow to their ſheaves*; they think every man takes notice of them, and obſerves their carriage and actions, when probably not one of a thouſand ever took them into conſideration, or ask'd who they were: Now we muſt conſider, that it is a hundred to one but there is a little of this vanity in us alſo, and that we do uſually look for more reſpect than is due; therefore it will not be amiſs in our reſpects towards others, *largiri aliquid*, to give men ſomething above we think they deſerve, and the rather, becauſe civil reſpect is cheap, and coſts us nothing, and we expect from others full as much as comes to our ſhare; for it is a miſtake to think that we do but righteouſly eſteem our ſelves, and that we have no more than a juſt value of our own worth.

Antiquit. Judaic. lib. 4.

2. In matters of *kindneſs* and *courteſies*, we muſt be uſeful to one another; I would have no man churliſh to me, but ready to gratify me, and do me a kindneſs. Do I think much to be denied a reaſonable favour, and doth not another ſo too? We would have all men love us, that is, bear ſuch an affection to us, that when it falls in their way, they ſhould be ready to do us a courteſy. We would not have courteſies done in a diſcourteous manner, extorted

torted by importunity, or upbraided to us afterwards. Let us likewise dispense favours with a liberal hand, and a chearful countenance, that men may see that they come from a kind heart, and a real good will.

3. In matters of *Charity* and *Compassion*; if any man be in misery, pity him, and help him to your power; if any be in necessity and want, contribute to his relief, without too scrupulous inquiries about him; for we would be thus dealt with our selves, we would not have others to harden their hearts, or shut up their bowels of compassion against us. Is any man cast down? do not insult over him, and trample upon him, do not look upon him with scorn, and rejoice over him in the day of distress. *Res est sacra miser: Persons in misery are sacred, and not to be violated.* When you see any man in calamity, think ye hear him say to you with *Job*, *I also could speak as you do; if your soul were in my soul's stead, I could heap up words against you, and shake mine head at you: but I would strengthen you with my mouth, and the moving of my lips should assuage your grief*, Job 16. 4, 5.

4. In matters of *Forbearance* and *Forgiveness*: We stand in need of Forbearance and Pardon from others, from God and men; we should be loth God should take advantage against us upon every provocation, and let fly at us with a thunder-bolt every time we offend him. We would not have men storm and fall into passion with us upon every slight occasion. I would have great allowances given to me; I would have my *ignorance*, and *inadvertency*, and *mistakes*, and *present temper*, and all *occasions* and *provocations*, and every thing considered. And when I have done amiss, upon acknowledgment of my fault, I would be forgiven and received to favour. Now if we would be thus dealt with, we must bear with others; the best men need some grains of allowance: *Nullum unquam ingenium placuit sine venia*: no man was ever so perfect, so accomplisht, so unexceptionable, but there was something or other in his carriage that needed pardon; every man hath a particular humour, we must give some allowance for that; every man is subject to mistake, we must allow for that too; and if a man have committed a fault, we must accept of an ingenuous acknowledgment, and be ready to grant him peace: there is a shame and disdain in humane nature of too vile a submission; therefore we must not bring a man too low when we have him at advantage.

5. In matters of *Report* and *Representation* of other *men*, and their *actions*: We must not take up a rash prejudice, or entertain a sinister apprehension of any upon slight grounds. Do not represent any man, his words or actions at a disadvantage: make the best of every thing. A man's good Name is like a Looking-glass, nothing is sooner crack'd, and every breath can sully it. Handle every man's Reputation with the same tenderness thou wouldest have every man use towards thine. Do not slander or defame any man, or rejoice to hear other mens miscarriages ript open: Do not account it an entertainment to censure and backbite all the world.

6. In matters of *Trust* and *Fidelity*: Where I place a confidence, and repose a trust, I would not be deceived: I must not deceive another, nor let any man fall that leans upon me. If a man trust me with the management of his business, or lodge a secret with me, or put his life into my power, or commit the care of his estate or children to me after his death: These are all ingenuous trusts, and must be discharged with the same faithfulness we expect from others.

7. In matters of *Duty* and *Obedience*: We must give that honour to our Parents, which we would expect from our Children; and pay that reverence to Masters, which we would exact from our Servants; We must rise up before the gray-head, and give respect to old age: For let not us think, but that the

change

change of *Relation* and of *Age* will have the ſame effect upon us, which it hath upon the reſt of the World: It is a folly to talk, that when we are *Old*, we ſhall be pleaſed with the inſolencies of *Youth*; when we are Maſters, we ſhall not be at all offended with the contemptuous carriage of our Servants; that it will not touch our hearts, to have our Children undutiful, and void of reſpect, to ſee the Fruit of our body unnatural and unkind to us.

8. In matters of *Freedom* and *Liberty*, which are not determined by any natural or poſitive Law, we muſt permit as much to others, as we aſſume to our ſelves: and this is a ſign of an equal and temperate perſon, and one that juſtly values his own underſtanding and power. But there is nothing wherein men uſually deal more unequally with one another, than in indifferent opinions and practices of Religion. I account that an indifferent opinion, which good men differ about; not that ſuch an opinion is indifferent as to truth or error, but as to ſalvation or damnation, it is not of neceſſary belief. By an indifferent practice in Religion, I mean that which is in its own nature neither a duty nor a ſin to do or omit. Where I am left free, I would not have any man to rob me of my liberty, or intrench upon my freedom, and becauſe he is ſatisfied ſuch a thing is lawful, and fit to be done, expect I ſhould do it, who think it otherwiſe; or becauſe he is confident ſuch an opinion is true, be angry with me becauſe I cannot believe as faſt as he. Now if another do ill, in doing thus to me, I cannot do well in doing ſo to another. And do not ſay that thou art ſure thou art in the right, and he that differs from thee in the wrong, and therefore thou mayeſt impoſe upon him, tho' he may not upon thee. Hath not every man this confidence of his own opinion and practice? and uſually the weakeſt cauſe bears up with the greateſt confidence? Now if thou wouldeſt not have another that is confident he is in the right, to impoſe upon thee, do not thou impoſe upon another for all thy confidence. We ſhould rather be modeſt, and ſay every one to our ſelves; *How came I to be ſo much wiſer than other men? Which way came the Spirit of the Lord, from ſo many wiſe and pious men, to ſpeak unto me? Is it a peculiar priviledge granted to me, that I cannot be miſtaken? or are not they moſt of all miſtaken, who think they cannot miſtake? If then I be but like other men, why ſhould I take ſo much upon me, as if my underſtanding were to be a rule, and my apprehenſions a ſtandard to the whole world? As if when another man differs from me, I did not differ as much from him: Why may not another man underſtand the thing better than I do? or what crime is it if he underſtand it not ſo well? Were all mens underſtandings caſt in the ſame mould? Is it preſumption for any man to know more than I do, or a ſin to know leſs?* *Job* doth well reprove this ſelf-conceit, *Job* 12. 2, 3. His friends would needs bear him down, and were very angry with him that he was not of their mind, and would not acknowledge all to be true of himſelf which they ſaid againſt him: he takes them up ſharply; *No doubt ye are the people, and wiſdom ſhall die with you; but I have underſtanding as well as you, and I am not inferior to you, who knoweth not ſuch things as theſe?* Let not any man think that he hath engroſſed all the knowledge of the world to himſelf, but others know the ſame things which he doth, and many things better than he.

9. In matters of *Commerce* and *Contracts*, which ariſe from thence: Now a *contract* is *a mutual transferring of right*; when I buy any thing of another, he makes over the right of ſuch a commodity to me for ſo much money, or other valuable thing, the right whereof I make over to him. Now in this kind of intercourſe, we are to be governed by this great Rule. In *making* of contracts we muſt *agere bonâ fide*, deal honeſtly and truly; in *performing* of contracts we muſt *liberare fidem*, ſatisfy the engagement we have made; for thus we our ſelves would be dealt withal.

Now if any ſhall deſire to be more particularly ſatisfied, *What that exact Righteouſneſs is, which in matter of Contracts ought to be obſerved betwixt Man*

and Man? I muſt confeſs this is a difficult queſtion, and to be handled very modeſtly, by ſuch as acknowledge themſelves unacquainted with the affairs of the world, and the neceſſities of things, and the particular and hidden reaſons of ſome kind of dealings; for he that is ignorant of theſe, may eaſily give rules which will not comply with the affairs of the world; he may complain of that which cannot be otherwiſe, and blame ſome kind of dealings which are juſtifiable from particular reaſons, not obvious to any man who is unſeen in the way of Trade. Beſides, there are many Caſes fall under this queſtion, which are very nice, but of great conſequence, and the greater caution and tenderneſs ought to be uſed in the reſolution of them, becauſe they are matters of conſtant practice, and the greateſt part of mankind are concerned in them: Now it is a dangerous thing, to miſtake in thoſe things in which many perſons are intereſted, eſpecially if they be things of ſuch a vaſt difference as *Good* and *Evil*, *Right* and *Wrong* are; for if that be determined to be lawful which is unlawful, men are *led into ſin*; if that be determined to be unlawful which is lawful, men are *led into a ſnare*; for if this determination be to the prejudice of men in their callings, it is an hundred to one, but common example and private intereſt will make many continue in that practice; and then the miſchief is this, though men do that which is lawful and right, yet they are ſtaggered by the authority and confidence of him who hath determined it unlawful, and ſo have ſome reluctancy in their conſciences in the doing of it; and this by accident becomes a great ſin to them; and when upon a ſick-bed, or any other occaſion, they come to be touched with the ſenſe of ſin, this will be matter of greater horror and affrightment to them than a real ſin, which they committed ignorantly, and were afterwards convinced of. Upon all theſe conſiderations, I ought to proceed with great warineſs in the anſwering of this queſtion; therefore I ſhall content my ſelf with ſpeaking thoſe things which are clear and evident, tho' they be but general, rather than venture out of my depth, by deſcending into particulars, and ſuch things as are out of my notice.

I ſhall therefore,

I. Lay down the general *Rule*.

II. Some *Propoſitions*, which may tend to the explication of it.

III. Some ſpecial Rules, for the directing of our commerce and intercourſe.

I. The general *Rule* is this: *That which it is not unreaſonable for me to deſire to gain by another, when I am to ſell, that I ſhould allow another to gain by me, when I am to buy; and that which it is not unreaſonable another ſhould gain by me, when I am to buy, that, and no more, I may gain by another, when I am to ſell.*

II. The *Propoſitions*, which I ſhall lay down for the further explication of this Rule, are theſe,

1. *In buying and ſelling, ſuch a proportion of gain may be taken, and ought to be allowed, as is mutually and univerſally beſt.* And this every man is preſumed to deſire, becauſe this will be certainly good for every one; whereas if it be not univerſally good, it may be bad for any one, if it be not mutually ſo, it will be bad for me by turns.

2. *That proportion of gain which allows a reaſonable compenſation for our time, and pains, and hazard, is univerſally and mutually beſt.* If the compenſation be unreaſonably great, it will be bad for the buyer; if unreaſonably little, it will be bad for the ſeller; if equal, and reaſonable, it will be good for all.

3. *That proportion of gain, which in common intercourſe and uſe of bargaining among thoſe who underſtand what they buy and ſell, is generally allowed, ought to be eſteemed a reaſonable compenſation.* This is evident, becauſe the common reaſon of mankind doth beſt determine what is reaſonable. Therefore thoſe who

ſpeak of *commutative juſtice*, and place it *in the equality of things contracted for*, need explaining, for *value* is not a thing *abſolute* and *certain*, but *relative* and *mutable*. Now to fix the value of things as much as may be, this *Rule* is commonly given, *Tanti unumquodque valet, quanti vendi poteſt, Every thing is worth ſo much as it may be ſold for*; which muſt not be underſtood too particularly, as if the preſent and particular appetite of the Contractor were to be the Rule, for every thing is not worth ſo much as any body will give for it, but ſo much as in common intercourſe among knowing perſons it will give. For this I take for a truth, that in the ordinary plenty of commodities, there is an ordinary and uſual price of them known to the underſtanding perſons of every profeſſion: If I be out in this, the matter of gain will be more uncertain than I thought on.

4. *A reaſonable compenſation doth not conſiſt in an indiviſible point, but hath a certain latitude, which likewiſe is to be determined by the common intercourſe and practice of mankind.* Suppoſe ten in the hundred be the uſual gain made of ſuch a commodity, eleven the higheſt, nine the loweſt, the latitude is betwixt nine and eleven.

5. *Every man engaged in a way of commerce, is preſumed to underſtand, unleſs the contrary be evident.* So that keeping within the latitude of a lawful gain, I may uſe my skill againſt another man in driving a bargain. But if his want of skill be evident (that is) ſufficiently known to me, I muſt uſe him as I would do a child, or other unskilful perſon; that is, fairly.

6. *Where the price of things alters* (as it often doth almoſt in all things) *no other Rule can be given but the common and market-price.* There are ſome things which are fixedly certain, *as Coin*; there I have no latitude at all, I may not put off a piece of money for more than its value, though a perſon out of ignorance would take it for more. There are ſome commodities, which in ordinary plenty being of an ordinary goodneſs, have an uſual price; here I have but little latitude, *viz.* that of the Market. In the riſing and falling of commodities, I have a greater latitude, but uſually in theſe caſes the Market ſets ſome kind of price, unleſs I be the ſole Maſter of a commodity; and here the latitude is the greateſt, and my own reaſon and moderation muſt limit me: And if any ask why I make the Market the Rule, ſeeing this ſeems to be as if I ſhould ſay, let every man get as much as he can, for ſo men in the Market do; I anſwer, The Market is uſually more reaſonable than the particular appetites of men; and though every man be apt to get as much as he can, yet men generally have an appetite to ſell, as well as to ſell dear, and that checks this, and men are brought to moderation, becauſe they are unwilling to loſe cuſtome; ſo that he that governs himſelf by the market-prices, not catching at particular advantages, ſeems to me to follow the ſafeſt Rule.

7. *There are ſome things allowed in common intercourſe, which are ſo rigorous, that they are hardly juſt*, which are rather tolerable than commendable. I will give one inſtance inſtead of many; A man hath a ſmall piece of ground lying within another man's eſtate, he is willing to ſell, but requires (poſſibly) forty or ſixty years purchaſe, or more, according to the particular appetite of the purchaſer. This ſeems not to be ſo agreeable to this great Rule of equity: I deny not but ſome advantage may be made in this caſe, and I will not ſet any peremptory limits; I ſhall only ſay this in general, we ſhould ſet a moderate value upon another man's appetite and convenience.

8. *It is to be feared, that ſomething very like unrighteouſneſs is woven into the myſtery of moſt Trades.* And like *Phideas* his image in *Minerva*'s Shield, cannot be defaced without the ruine of it. I think this is not a groundleſs jealouſie, but the confeſſion and complaint of the moſt knowing and underſtanding perſons in humane affairs. I ſhall inſtance only in the *ſleightneſs of work*, the *imba-*

ſing

sing of commodities, and setting them off by indirect advantages. I can only bewail this, for unless the world could generally be convinced of this, it is not like to be amended, Perfection is not to be looked for in this imperfect state, we must be content if things are passable.

9. *Nevertheless we ought to aspire after as great a degree of Righteousness and Equity, as the condition of humane affairs will admit.* We should bend all our endeavours to the bettering of the World, and not only avoid all unrighteousness, but draw back as much as in us lies from the indirect practices of the World, and from all appearance of Unrighteousness.

III. The more *particular Rules* are these:

1. *Impose upon no man's ignorance or unskilfulness.* Thou mayest set a just value upon thine own commodity, but not a price upon another man's head; I mean, thou mayest not rate a man's want of understanding, or set a tax upon his ignorance; therefore take no advantage of children or any other incompetent persons, and do not only use them with justice, but with ingenuity, as those that repose a trust in you, and cast themselves upon your equity. And here are some questions to be resolved.

Quest. 1. *If a man be otherwise skilful in his calling, may not I take advantage of his ignorance of a particular circumstance wherein the contract is concerned?*

De Officiis. l. 3. *Ans.* I will tell you how *Tully* resolves this in a particular case; *A man* (saith he) *brings a Ship of Corn from* Alexandria *to* Rhodes, *in a time of great Famine; he may have what price he will, he knows of a great many more Ships that will be there next day, may he conceal this from the* Rhodians? He determines peremptorily, he may not. If we will be worse than Heathens —— I say no more.

Quest. 2. *But may we not take advantage of the ignorance of the seller, though not of the buyer?* the difference is, he that offers to sell any thing at such a price, is willing so to part with it. Now *there is no wrong done to him that is willing.*

I answer, *A man is so far willing, as he is knowing. Aristotle* tells us, *That Ignorance is a sort of unwillingness.* If a man out of forgetfulness, or want of consideration, or sufficient understanding of his own calling, mistake himself, I may not make a prize of this man's weakness; for he is only willing to sell it so upon supposition; he remembers right, and understands himself aright, but the thing being really worth more, he is absolutely unwilling, and I am injurious to him in taking advantage.

Quest. 3. *May I not sell secret faults and vices in a commodity?*

Ans. If the faults be such as men take for granted do often happen, and notwithstanding them, they do not account any man to have deceived them, then they are faults pardoned by common consent; but if they be such as I am agrieved at, and think my self not fairly dealt withal when they happen, then some think it is enough to allow for them in the price; but I think *Tully* hath Offic. l. 3. determined it better, *Ne quid omnino quod venditur novit emptor ignoret, That the buyer should not be left ignorant of any thing the seller knows.* And this seems reasonable; for I know not but another man may value those faults higher than I do; however it is not so fair for me to make another man's bargain.

2. *Impose upon no man's necessity.* If a man must needs buy *now*, or *of thee*, because none else is near, make no advantage of this.

3. *When God's providence hath put into thy hands ſome great opportunity and advantage* (as by the intervention of ſome unexpected Law, by a ſudden war or peace betwixt Nations, or by ſome other caſualty) *do not ſtretch it to the utmoſt. Fortunam reverenter habe, Uſe this providential advantage modeſtly*, conſidering that He whoſe bleſſing gave thee this opportunity, can blaſt thee a thouſand ways.

4. *Uſe plainneſs in all your dealings*; this the *Roman Laws* called *bonâ fide agere*; Do not diſparage another man's commodity, or raiſe your own beſides truth, this is ſinful; do not inſinuate a commendation or diſparagement indirectly, thereby to lead a man into an error, that you may draw on a bargain the more eaſily; do not (as your phraſe is) ask or *bid much out of the way*; for if this be not ſimply unlawful, yet it doth not become an honeſt man. We commend the *Quakers*, becauſe they are *at a word* in all their dealings: we would be loth not to be counted as good Chriſtians as they are; let us then do as good things as they do, eſpecially when we account thoſe things *praiſe worthy*; and I am ſure *this* is no ways contrary to *Juſtice*, and *Honeſty*, and *Truth*; I know nothing that gives ſo real a reputation to that Sect as this practice, and would it not adorn thoſe who account themſelves the more ſober Chriſtians? If we praiſe this in others, let us practiſe it in our ſelves. We are apt to value our ſelves much by our *Orthodox Judgments*; but let us take heed that *Sectaries* do not confute us by their *Orthodox Lives*. For the ſake of Religion, *Next to your conſciences, in all your dealings, tender your reputation*, for, *quod conſcientia eſt apud Deum, id fama eſt apud homines, That which conſcience is in reference to God, that our reputation is in reſpect of men.*

5. *In matters of verity and fancy, and things which have no certain eſtimation, uſe moderation*; and ſo much the rather, becauſe in theſe thou art left to be thy own judge.

6. *Do not go to the utmoſt of things lawful.* He that will always walk upon the brink, is in great danger of falling down; he that will do the utmoſt of what he may, will ſometime or other be tempted to what he ſhould not; for it is a ſhort and eaſie paſſage from the utmoſt limits of *lawful*, to what is *evil* and *unlawful*; therefore in that latitude which you have of gain, uſe *favour towards the poor and neceſſitous*, *ingenuity* towards the *ignorant and unskilful*, *moderation* towards *all men.*

7. *Where you have any doubt about the equity of your dealings, chuſe the ſafeſt part, and that which will certainly bring you peace*; for not only a good conſcience, but a quiet conſcience is to be valued above gain. Therefore in matters of duty do the moſt, in matters of privilege and diviſions of right, and proportions of gain (where there is any doubt) chuſe the leaſt, for this is always ſafe.

Thus I have laid down the *Rule* and explained it, and have given as particular directions, as I could ſafely adventure to do; I muſt now leave it to every man to apply it more particularly to himſelf, and to deal faithfully with his own conſcience, in the uſe of it. Circumſtances which vary, Caſes are infinite, therefore when all is done, much muſt be left to the equity and chancery of our own Breaſts. I have not told you how much in the Pound you may gain, and no more, nor can I: A man may make a greater gain at one time than another of the ſame thing; he may take thoſe advantages which the change of things, and the providence of God gives him, uſing them moderately: A man may take more of ſome Perſons than of others; provided a man uſe all men righteouſly, he may uſe ſome favourably. But I have on purpoſe forborn to deſcend to too many particularities, among other reaſons, for the ſake of Sir *Thomas More's* obſervation concerning the Caſuiſts of his time, who (he ſaith) by their too particular reſolutions of Caſes, did not teach men *non peccare*, *not to ſin*, but

did shew them *quàm propè ad peccatum liceat accedere sine peccato, how near men might come to sin, and yet not sin.*

The Uses I shall make of all this, are these two:

Use 1. *Let us not revenge our selves*; The Rule is not, we should do to others as they do to us, but as we would have them to do to us; as if it were on purpose to prevent revenge. St. *Luke* forbids revenge from this Rule, *Luke* 6. 31,32. For if you love them that love you, &c. But love your Enemies. Revenge is the greatest offence against this Rule; for he that revengeth an injury, hath received one, he that hath received one, knows best what that is which he would not have another to do to him; the nature of evil and injury is better known to the Patient than to the Agent, men know better what they suffer than what they do, he that is injured feels it and knows how grievous it is, and will he do that to another?

Use 2. Let me press this Rule upon you; live by it; in all your carriage and dealings with men, let it be present to you. Ask your selves upon every occasion, Would I that another should deal thus with me, and carry himself thus towards me? But I shall press this chiefly as to justice and righteousness in our Commerce. It is said, that *Severus* the Emperor caused this Rule to be written upon his Palace, and in all publick places: Let it be writ upon our Houses, and Shops, and Exchanges. This exhortation is not altogether improper for this Auditory: you that frequent these Exercises, seem to have a good sense of that part of Religion which is contained in the first Table; do not by your violations of the Second, marr your obedience to the First; do not prove your selves Hypocrites in the first Table, by being wicked in the Second; give not the World just cause to say, that you are ungodly, because they find you to be unrighteous; but manifest your love to God, whom you have not seen, by your love to your Brother, whom you have seen; and if any man wrong his Brother, he cannot love him. Do not reject or despise this exhortation, under the contemptuous name of *Morality*. Our Saviour tells us, this is a chief part of that which hath ever been accounted Religion in the World; *It is the Law and the Prophets*; and he by enjoining it hath adopted it into Christianity, and made it Gospel. We should have an especial love to this Precept, not only as it is the Dictate of Nature, and the Law of *Moses*, not only as it is a *Jewish* and *Gentile* principle, but as it is of the *Houshold of Faith*. When the young man told Christ, that *he had kept the Commandments from his youth*, it is said, *Jesus loved him*: where-ever we have learned to despise *Morality*, *Jesus* loved it. When I read the Heathen Writers, especially *Tully* and *Seneca*, and take notice what Precepts of Morality, and Laws of Kindness are every where in their Writings, I am ready to fall in love with them. How should it make our blood to rise in many of our faces, who are Christians, to hear with what strictness *Tully* determines Cases of Conscience, and how generously he speaks of Equity and Justice towards all men. *Societatis arctissimum vinculum est magis arbitrari esse contra naturam, hominem homini detrahere sui commodi causâ, quàm omnia incommoda subire: This is the strongest bond of society, to account it to be more against nature, for any man to wrong another for his own advantage, than to undergo the greatest inconveniences.* And again, *Non enim mihi est vita mei utilior, quam animi talis effectu neminem, ut violem commodi mei gratiâ: Nor is my life more dear and profitable to me, than such a temper and disposition of mind, as that I would not wrong any man for my own advantage.* Again, *Tollendum est in rebus contrahendis omne mendacium: No kind of lying must be used in bargaining.* And, to mention no more, *Nec ut emat melius, nec ut vendat quicquam simulabit; aut dissimulabit vir bonus: A good man will not counterfeit, or conceal any thing, that he may buy the cheaper, or sell the dearer.* And yet further to check our proneness to despise moral Righteousness, I cannot but mention an excellent passage to this purpose, which I have met with in a learned man of our own Nation. *Two things* (saith he) *make up a Christian,*

Lampridius.

Mark 10. 20, 21.

Offic. Lib. 3.

Mr. *Hales.*

ſtian, a true faith, and an honeſt converſation; and though the former uſually gives us the Title, the latter is the ſurer; for true profeſſion without an honeſt converſation, not only ſaves not, but increaſeth our weight of puniſhment; but a good life without true profeſſion, though it brings us not to Heaven, yet it leſſens the meaſure of our judgment, ſo that a moral man ſo called, is a Chriſtian by the ſurer ſide. And afterwards, *I confeſs* (ſaith he) *I have not yet made that proficiency in the ſchools of our age, as that I could ſee why the ſecond Table, and the Acts of it, are not as properly the parts of Religion and Chriſtianity, as the Acts and Obſervations of the Firſt; if I miſtake, then it is St.* James *that hath abuſed me, for he deſcribing Religion by its proper Acts, tells us, that* pure Religion, and undefiled before God and the Father is this, to viſit the Fatherleſs and the Widow in their affliction, and to keep himſelf unſpotted from the World; *ſo that that thing which in an eſpecial refined dialect of the new Chriſtian Language, ſignifies nothing but Morality and Civility, that in the language of the Holy Ghoſt imports true Religion. Mark* 12. 33, 34. When the Scribe told Chriſt, that *to love God with all the heart, &c. and our neighbours as our ſelves, was more than whole burnt offerings and ſacrifices,* it is ſaid, *When Jeſus ſaw that he anſwered diſcreetly, he ſaid unto him, thou art not far from the Kingdom of God.* They that would have a Religion without moral Righteouſneſs, talk *indiſcreetly*, and are further from the Kingdom of God than a meer moral man. If we neglect this part of Religion, we diſparage the Goſpel, and abuſe our profeſſion, we are but pretenders to Chriſtianity. *Plutarch* ſpeaks ſomewhere to this purpoſe, He had rather poſterity ſhould ſay, there was never ſuch a man as *Plutarch*, than that he was a vicious, or cruel, or unjuſt man.

I had rather a man ſhould not call himſelf a Chriſtian, that he ſhould renounce his Title, than that by his life and actions he ſhould repreſent Chriſtians to the world as oppreſſors, as unjuſt, and treacherous dealers. If men will only uſe Religion for to cover their unrighteouſneſs, I had rather they would put off their Cloaks, and be Knaves *in querpo*, that every body may know them, than that they ſhould go like Highwaymen in vizards and diſguiſes, only that they may rob honeſt men the more ſecurely.

And to move you to the practice of this Rule, I ſhall only offer to you one Conſideration, but which hath ſo much weight in it, that it may be inſtead of many; *As you deal with others, ſo ye ſhall be dealt with.* With what meaſure you mete to others, it ſhall be meaſured to you, is a proverbial ſpeech often uſed by our Saviour, and which one time or other you will find to be very ſignificant. God doth many times by his providence order things ſo, that in this life mens unrighteouſneſs returns upon their own heads, and their violent dealing upon their own pates: There is a divine *Nemeſis*, which brings our iniquities upon our ſelves. No man hath any vice or humour alone, but it may be match'd in the world, either in its own kind, or in another: If a man be cruel and inſolent, *a Bajazet ſhall meet with a Tamerlane*; if a man delight to jeer and abuſe others, *no man hath ſo good a wit, but another hath as good a memory*; he will remember it to revenge it: He that makes a trade of deceiving and couzening others, he doth but teach others to couzen him; and there are but few Maſters in any kind but are outdone by ſome of their Scholars. But however we may eſcape the hands of men, how ſhall we eſcape our own Conſciences, either trouble of Conſcience in this life, or the worm of Conſcience in the next? How ſhall we eſcape the hands of the Living God? How ſhall we eſcape the damnation of Hell? 1 *Theſ.* 4. 6. *Let no man go beyond, or defraud his Brother in any matter, for God is the avenger of all ſuch.* He will take their cauſe into his own hands, and render to us according to our fraudulent and cruel dealing with others, *Mat.* 18. 35. *So likewiſe ſhall my Heavenly Father do alſo unto you, &c.* What our Saviour ſaith, *Mat.* 19. 29. that there is no man that denies himſelf in Houſes or Lands, *&c.* for Chriſt's ſake and the Goſpel's, but ſhall receive in this life a hundred-fold, and in the world to come

come everlaſting life, is true alſo here. There is no man that is injurious to his Brother in houſes, or lands, or good name, or any other thing, but ſhall probably receive in this world an hundred-fold; however (without repentance) in the world to come, everlaſting miſery. In the next world men will find, that they have but impoveriſhed themſelves by their ill-gotten wealth, and heaped up for themſelves treaſures of wrath. Read thoſe words and tremble at them, *Jam.* 5. 1, 2, 3, 4, 5. *Go to now ye rich men, weep and howl, for your miſery ſhall come upon you,* &c.

Let us then be perſwaded, as we love God whom we have not ſeen, as we love the Goſpel, which we read and hear every day, and would preſerve the reputation of it, as we would better the world, and the condition of mankind, as we love our ſelves and our own peace and happineſs, to deal juſtly and equally with all men. Till we come to live by this Rule of Equity, we can never hope to ſee the world a quiet habitation. But if this were practiſed among us, then *Glory would dwell in our Land; Mercy and Truth would meet together, Righteouſneſs and Peace would kiſs each other; Truth would ſpring out of the Earth, and Righteouſneſs would look down from Heaven; yea, the Lord would give that which is good, and our Land would yield her increaſe; Righteouſneſs would go before him, and ſet us in the way of his ſteps.*

Pſal. 85. 9, 10, 11, 12, 13.

F I N I S.

281621